

PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



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Charivaria

A NEW radio announcer is supposed to have a North Country accent. We understand that as a precautionary measure the other announcers have been inoculated against it.

All that Japan seems to demand of the world just now is the right of self-extinction.

"The King of Italy is still the nominal head of the State," says a writer. His latest title is ex-Emperor of Abyssinia.

Eight years ago the Italian side of Mont Blanc was named Mount Mussolini. That was when it *had* an Italian side.

"HITLER will crumble one day," says a writer. Popular belief is that he is now ninety per cent. fancy cakes.

The quisling leaders who left their own countries to sign the Anti-Comintern Pact are now all back home again. They were afraid of that.

In America a small boy charged with many burglaries admitted that he saw six films a week. He blames a life of crime for turning him into a hardened cinema-goer.

The Brighton Corporation appeals to householders not to throw banana-skins into pig-food-bins. Or radium.

Herr VON RIBBENTROP is said to be losing his nerve about Russia. Yet he certainly seemed to have it the last time he was in Moscow.

RIBBENTROP blames ROOSEVELT and CHURCHILL for starting the war. There's no satisfying this man. Later he will be blaming them for finishing it.

It was announced after the recent signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact that it would be kept in Berlin. Other pacts signed by the Axis Powers haven't been kept at all.

Impending Apology

"Off the record: Blanche is a very pleasant, demure girl who loves to dance. She has a boy friend, in fact she was engaged to be married this past spring, but the draft took the lucky young fellow off to a camp in the south."—*American Paper*.

The mystery of an armoured car with motor-cycle escort seen to draw up outside Broadcasting House is now explained. It appears that a new joke was delivered to one of the resident comedians.



Here's Hoping

An isolated paragraph in "The Times" on November 20th:

"Metropolitan Police cricket team will meet the Army on July 1, and oppose the British Empire XI on August 2 and 3. Both games are at Imber Court, Surrey."

Investigators of psychic phenomena in America claim that a certain railway train is haunted. One passenger reported that he was awakened from a doze by a bony tap on the shoulder and looked up to see the grisly face of a ticket-inspectre.

To the German Armies

YOU have gone into a land of no returning,
Not in the Eastern snows nor in the West,
Made havoc and lit fires that shall be burning
Long after the guns rest.

In the heart's country pity shall not find you,
Nor mercy take you from the cold again.
The squadrons of remembrance are behind you
And the legions of the slain.

And if the shadow stirs in the dark entry
And the twig trembles and the leaf goes by,
Waste not your challenges, deserted sentry,
The dead shall not reply.

You have taken a tower and broken it to pieces
Till not one stone is left upon a stone—
A wilderness for ever when war ceases
And that tower is your own.

You have gone into a land of no repentance,
Triumph and trumpet shall not help you now.
The judge has passed the irrevocable sentence.
The brand is on your brow. EVOE.

o o .

Name This City.

IT is the most delightful city I know.
A man in my carriage told me where to lunch when
I got there. "Turn to the left," he said, "then take
the first to your right and it's straight up on the right-hand
side just short of the archway."

I turned to my left, then took the first to my right and
there it was, straight up on the right-hand side, just short
of the archway. This gave me a favourable impression.
I don't remember ever before having been correctly directed
by a man in a railway-carriage. Either the place has
moved since he was last there, or he is thinking of another
place altogether, or maybe he is sitting with his back to
the engine and doesn't know his right hand from his left.
But this was different. There the place was, just short
of the archway.

I asked for a sherry. The Romans used to prefix "*num*"
to this sort of question, and with reason. The waitress,
however, brought me a sherry without comment or delay.
She also brought me an excellent lunch and a very
moderate bill.

I decided to have my hair cut. I do not have my hair
cut very often (as sergeants used to remark in the early
days of the war), and there is therefore considerable
competition among the better class of hairdresser to trim
me back and sides and take a little off the top. I thought
it would be a pretty compliment to this city to have my
hair cut in it.

I went through the archway and asked a traffic policeman
whether I was plumb in the centre of the town. It is
important to be sure of this when selecting a hairdresser.

"No," he said. "I'm plumb in the centre. But you're
not far off it."

I liked his attitude. He wasn't going to concede to a
stranger the supreme distinction, but short of that the world
was mine. I asked him to direct me to the cathedral and
to a barber.

"In that order?" he asked, holding up a horse-drawn
vehicle with his left hand.

I said No; it seemed to me more reverent to have my
hair cut first.

When he had told me where to go, I told him in return
that I had been born near this great and beautiful city but
that I had not been back to it since I was six.

"Ah," he said.

He was obviously interested, but too engrossed with the
traffic to make a longer reply. So I pushed on.

One goes right from this policeman to get one's hair cut
and up the first turning to the left.

"Staying here, Sir?" asked the barber, clashing his
scissors above my head.

"No," I said, and told him I had been born quite near
but hadn't been back since I was six.

He stopped clashing and began to snip. "Notice a good
many changes, I expect?" he said.

"Well, no," I said; "to tell you the truth I can't remember
what it used to be like."

"Ah," he said, and there we let the matter rest.

You go up a steep hill to the cathedral, between old
brick houses set close together but pleasantly low so that
the sun can get down to the cobbles and warm them up.
Rather more than half-way up, where the gradient is about
one in two and grass grows freely here and there (at least,
looking back, I have an impression of grass; I didn't walk
up notebook in hand, thank the Lord, looking for fine
writing), some white posts are set across the way, to indicate,
I suppose, to the persistent motorist that the time has
really come to take his engine elsewhere. Just beyond these
posts I rested before the final assault—and found myself
outside a diminutive tobacconist's shop.

"*Num*?" I said, entering.

The tobacconist asked me what sort I would like.

Excellent, irreproachable city!

He also sold me a packet of pipe-cleaners and a
box of matches, as if it were the most natural thing in
the world.

I felt friendly towards the man and inclined for
conversation.

"I was born here," I said, "when I was six. And haven't
been back since."

"I mean," I said, correcting myself, "I haven't been
born since I was six. Not back here."

"No?" he said. He seemed to be considering something.

"Once is generally enough," he added.

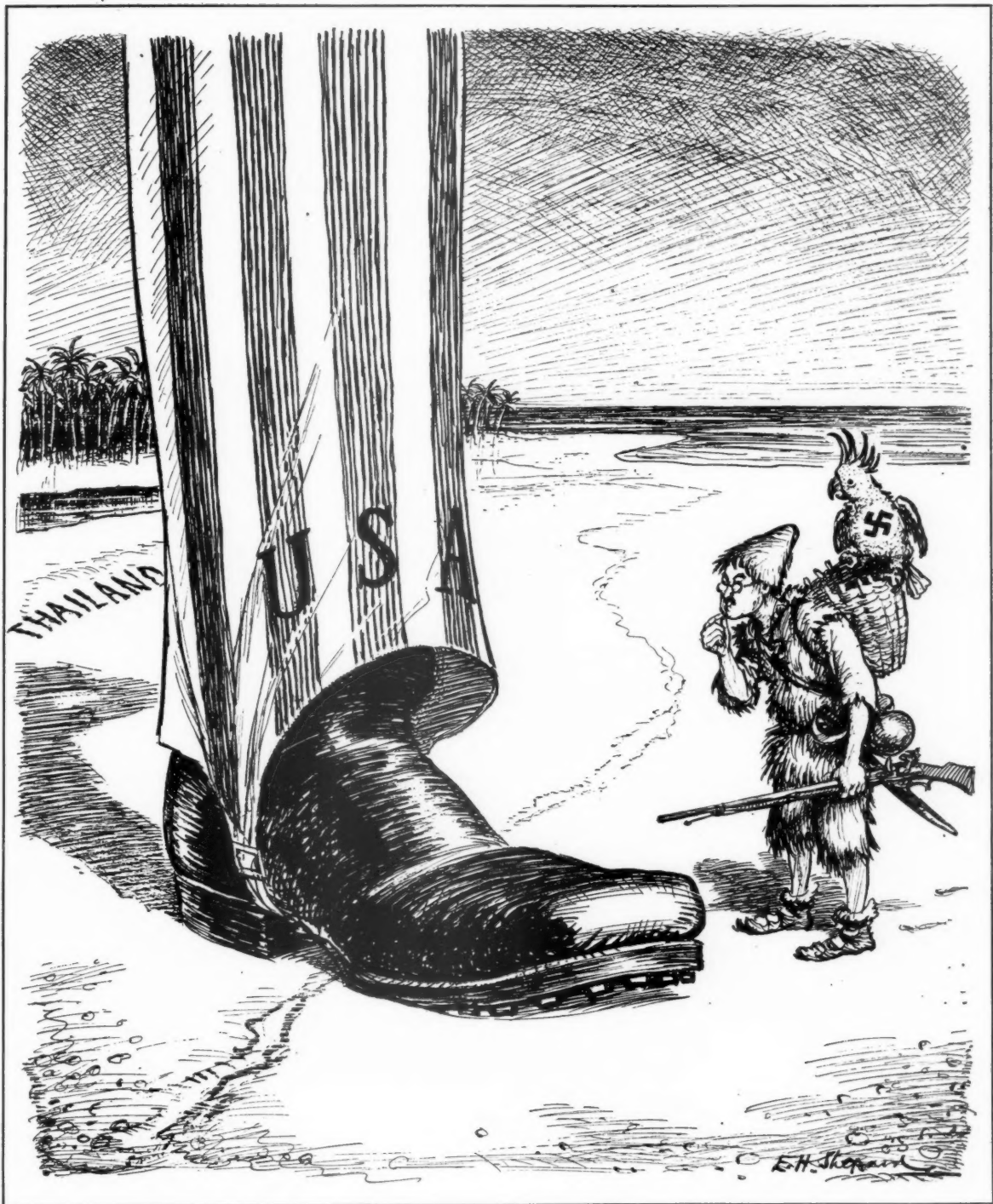
I didn't know what he meant by this, and to cover up
my confusion asked him to show me some pipes. He
showed me some nice ones and we talked quite sensibly
about the shortage of briars and the advantages of
a wide mouthpiece. I began to feel my confidence
coming back.

"There used to be a shop here," I said, "I remember it
well, where one could buy model engines, good model
engines. Blewitt's, was it? Bostock? Something like that.
Funny how these things go out of one's head."

"Blewitt's?" he said. "No, I don't think there's—I'll
just inquire. Lu—cy!"

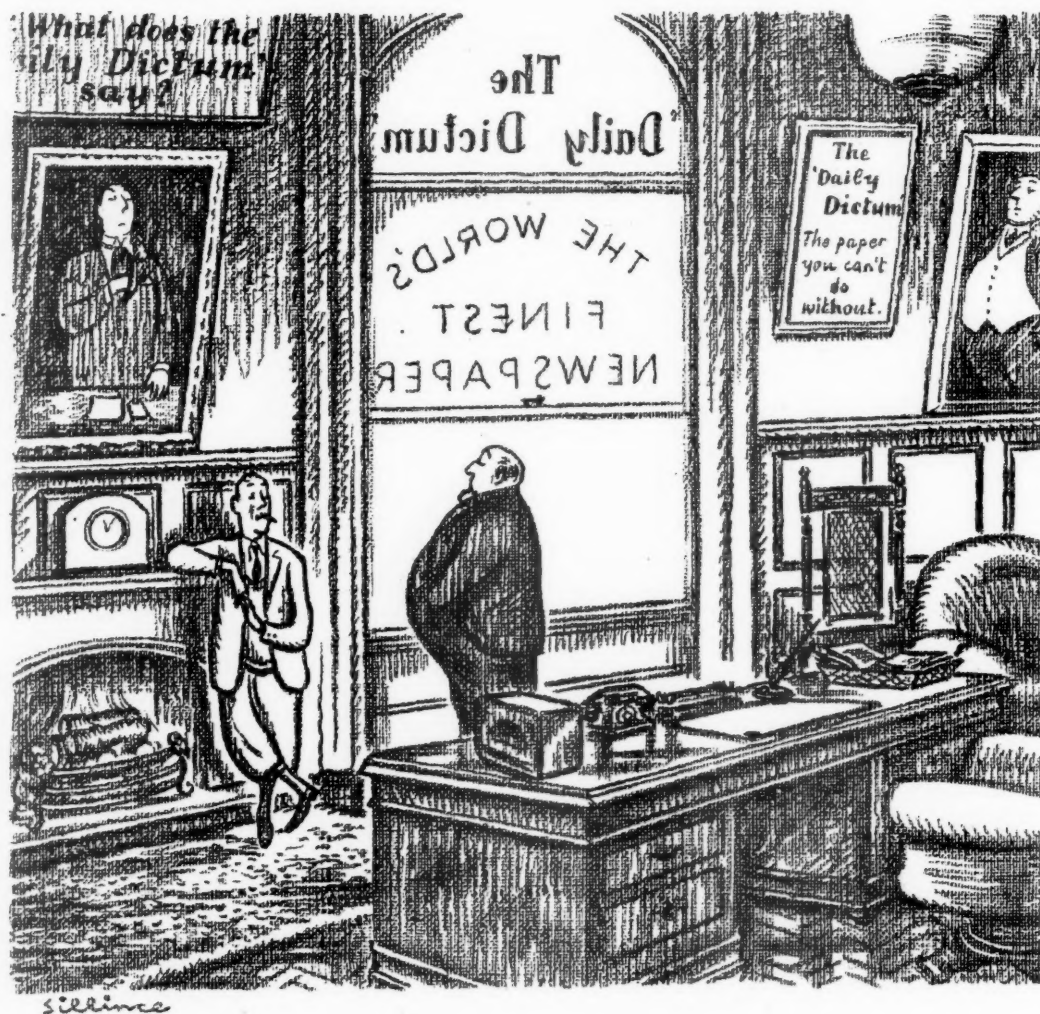
"Oh, please don't trouble," I began. "I was only——"
but it was too late to stop him.

"Blewitt's?" he said to a nice grey-haired old lady who
appeared from the back regions of the shop. "Know of a



ROBINSON KURUSU

"And I thought it was only a footprint."



"Couldn't we tell our readers they're complacent or something?"

toy-shop of that name? Gentleman here wants to buy a model engine."

"No, no," I said. "I don't want to buy a model engine. It's just that I wonder if the old shop still exists."

"What old shop was that?" asked the lady kindly.

"Well the trouble is, it's stupid of me, but I just can't remember. I used to live here, you see—"

"Before he was born," put in the tobacconist.

"—and thought perhaps, if I could find it, it would be pleasant to look in and—and look at the model engines and things. If you see what I mean," I added, blushing rather.

"We've no model engines here, I'm afraid," said the old lady. "None at all. We don't really stock toys, you see."

"Oh, well, in that case I'll be getting along, thanks," I said. It seemed best to accept the situation and leave before I started knocking things over and dropping my stick as I always do when things get a little confusing.

"Good afternoon," I said.

"Good day," said the man. "Look in again next time you're six."

When you get to the top of the hill, you can turn right to the cathedral or left to the castle. I turned left, because I wanted to leave the cathedral to the last.

The castle is good. They leave you alone and you can mooch about the old prison and examine the laborious wall-carvings of victims in the still older dungeons to your heart's content. The cathedral from the outside, as everyone knows, is superb. The inside I don't know about, because I had a train to catch. That is always the way it goes; if you leave something special to the last you never get to it. Hitler, I dare say, feels like that about this country.

I left Lincoln, for the purposes of the record, at a quarter past four precisely.

H. F. E.

Resignation

"YES . . . well, dear, here I am, and greater nonsense you never heard in your life, as I said to the doctor and surgeon both. My parents died in their beds like Christians, and my dear Aunt Fanny, who was always said to have been wild in her youth, passed away at the Mission Station in Mgw-Bgwli, and why should I be taken off to hospital just to please them?"

"Because, Miss Littlemug, we all hope that after the operation you'll recover completely."

"That's exactly what I said, dear. 'If you think,' I said, 'that all this ridiculous nonsense with carving-knives like so many butchers is going to do me any good, you never made a greater mistake in your lives,' I said. Even poor King Edward VII was never the same again after they'd finished with him, as well I remember, though I was really only a tot at the time, but I still have one of those very nice medals that were issued. In a very small-shell-box with a blue velvet lid on the top of the medicine-chest in the bathroom, if I remember rightly—and I feel sure I do."

"I feel sure you do too, Miss Littlemug, but ought you to talk, do you think?"

"Talk, dear? I shouldn't dream of talking. I am prepared, as I said to the Matron this morning, to keep perfectly quiet and give them no trouble whatever. All I ask is that my tea should be properly made, and my things left *within reach* and not continually dusted and put back in the wrong places, and plenty of writing materials, and the nurse kept right away from me unless I ring, which I shall never do under any circumstances whatsoever."

"Oh, dear, Miss Littlemug! Won't that make it rather difficult for them to look after you properly?"

"Certainly not, dear! What nonsense! And now tell me exactly what's happening at home. Don't keep anything from me out of mistaken kindness, I beg of you. I'd *rather* hear. If the house has been burnt down, or the whole village committed suicide, I'd *prefer* to be told straight out."

"But they haven't—I mean, they're all terribly sorry about your operation and sent heaps of messages; but otherwise everything is going on very much the same as usual."

"I don't wish to contradict you, dear, for a moment, but I must say I think that's impossible. I lie here going practically mad, I may say,

wondering how in the world the choir is managing, and the Tea Committee of the Women's Institute, and the Nursing Association; and one simply doesn't dare think what will happen if the A.R.P. should be called out. Not that I mean one is in any way indispensable—far from it; but I *do* feel that the village must absolutely be going to pieces in every direction at once. And so I told the doctor. 'Do you *know*,' I asked him, 'what you're doing?'"

"Good gracious, Miss Littlemug! What did he say to that?"

"He simply said, dear, that he did know. Perfectly well. So I didn't answer a word. I simply gave him a look and said: 'Very well. Have it your own way.' That was all I said. Not a single word. *Let* the choir make the most dreadful muddle of 'Ye Banks and Braes,' and the Tea Committee go on and on without a single idea beyond fish-paste sandwiches and a Wooltonian bun made without eggs or sugar or flour or butter or milk. *Let* the whole of the Nursing Association go to rack and ruin and the A.R.P. remain without the faintest notion of where they're to meet, let alone what they're to do when they get there—and then see if you can sleep in your bed at night, that's all!"

"Good heavens, Miss Littlemug! What did he say *then*?"

"Simply took my temperature, dear. With a clinical thermometer. Neither

more nor less. That *shows* you he couldn't think of anything to say."

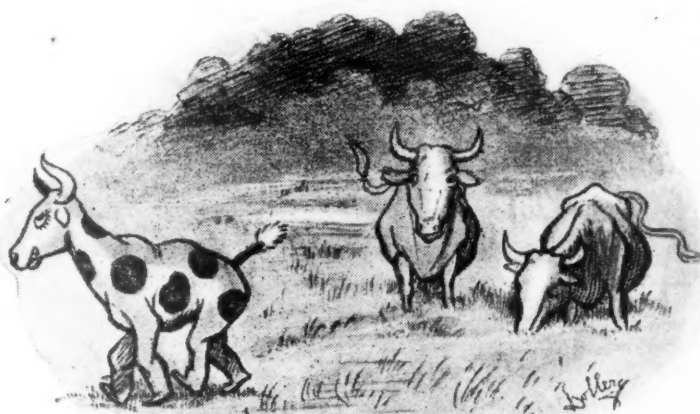
"Mightn't it have shown that he wanted to know what your temperature was?"

"No, dear. Not possibly. Because I told him beforehand. I said to him: 'You'll find me exactly two points above normal. The Littlemugs,' I said, 'are practically all like that. I believe poor Cousin Walter, who was thoroughly misunderstood in the Army—in fact they went so far as to court-martial him shortly after the Siege of Lucknow—was the only exception. But you'll find that the rest of us,' I said, 'are exactly two points above normal. Day and night, and year in and year out. So why waste time?' I said."

"I quite understand, and I'm sure the doctor did too. I really think you ought to rest now."

"Yes, dear. And that's what I'm determined to do. I lie here and think of the expense and worry of it all, and everything going to pieces without me, and how little all these hospital people understand what they're doing, and it takes all my self-control not to bite the bed-post in half and throw the pieces at their heads. However, that's a thing I'm determined not to do, and my will is like iron. I may be led, dear, but forced I cannot be. And that's exactly what I propose to tell them when it comes to the anaesthetic."

E. M. D.



"They say she's on the stage."

At the Pictures

LOFTY FACT AND BRILLIANT FICTION

PEOPLE who come in late for *Sergeant York* (Director: HOWARD HAWKS) are inclined to scoff at the incredibility of his celebrated feat—not only because they missed the note at the beginning declaring that every episode in it is true, but also because they have not been shown, as the rest of us have been, the man's force of character. The aim of the film is wisely not to labour the almost comically stupendous incident of his all-but-single-handed capture, in October 1918, of a hundred and thirty-two Germans, but to build up beforehand the idea of the kind of man who could make it: to outline the circumstances of his hard life, to show his determination, to explain his personality. Even so, it would possibly not have succeeded without GARY COOPER.

Most of it—over an hour has passed before America is even in the war—deals with *Alvin York's* life with his mother and younger brother and sister in the Tennessee mountains, his constant toil to hack a living from the tough, rocky earth and his desperate efforts to get "a piece of bottom land" where cultivation will be easier and he can have something to offer the girl he wishes to marry. The life of these simple mountain people who live a three-day mail trip from the nearest newspaper has seldom before been treated other than farcically by the films; but their philosophy (to "be beholden to nobody") and deep religious feeling are shown to be the basis of *Alvin's* character (he himself is converted, after a wild youth, by what he takes to be a sign from heaven). He starts by saying he "ain't agin nobody nor nothin'—'cept gettin' sober," comes later to the conviction that "them that lives by the sword'll be a-perishin' by the sword," and finally, thinking things out with the help of a history of the U.S., decides that he ought to be in the Army.

The film is long (over two hours) and confused,

but absorbing; sometimes moving, often funny, and at last, in the famous war-episode, thrilling. There is not much danger that you will forget to see it.



[Sergeant York]

THE CAROUSEL'S RETURN

Alvin C. York GARY COOPER
Mother York MARGARET WYCHERLY

Tom, Dick and Harry (Director: GARSON KANIN) is an exceedingly enjoyable picture, and aesthetically a

very much better one, in a totally different key: a sheer fable, full of delight, with GINGER ROGERS at her admirable best. The theme is a girl's choice between three men; the embroidery includes a fantastic dream of her life with each. She is a romantically-minded telephone-operator, naïve but with some instinctive shrewdness, and we recognize from these dreams that she has perfectly realized the difference between her three suitors. The mainspring of the plot is that she thoughtlessly manages to get engaged to all of them at once.

The piece ought really to be called *Janie*, for it is essentially a study much more of this delightfully vague girl than of her three boy-friends. It works up to a surprise ending—a real surprise, that is, for those (in fact nearly everybody) who can refrain from the temptation to think out, bearing in mind the values that the cinema has long taught us to prize, the most likely choice for a young film heroine from among such a trio. I won't put their qualities into words; from those you would guess it at once; but the film is so skilfully done that most people are taken in until the last moment.

Miss ROGERS is irresistible, the comic incidents are all well imagined, and everybody else is good too; BURGESS MEREDITH is outstanding. This is a film to see without fail, and in spite of the surprise ending it is no less enjoyable at the second visit.



[Tom, Dick and Harry]

A TRIGAMOUS DAY-DREAM

Dick ALAN MARSHAL
Harry BURGESS MEREDITH
Tom GEORGE MURPHY
Janie GINGER ROGERS

The most noticeable of the others at the moment is probably *When Ladies Meet* (Director: ROBERT Z. LEONARD), which offers a great deal of talk—it is adapted from a play—but includes some good laughs. Not, I suggest, enough. I don't think I can be the only one who finds it difficult to take seriously the authoress (JOAN CRAWFORD, this time) whose fiction "situation" is repeated in her own life. These film authoresses are altogether too high-class: they behave as if they were FLAUBERT or somebody, but their conversation seldom suggests that they know anything at all about writing. R. M.

The Theatre Carries On.

THERE is much that is strange in the London theatre to-day. To forget for a moment the general strangeness of many of the actual productions, there is the particular problem created by the calling up of most of the younger and many of the older juveniles. As a result of this, hundreds of struggling playwrights have given up struggling and have locked away their respective *magna opera*, secure in the knowledge that at last they will have a reason to offer when their friends want to know why the play hasn't been produced.

After all, only one playwright can write *The Women*, and Clare Boothe has already done it. It seems a pity that she wasted its peculiar casting attraction by producing it at a time when there were more male actors trying to act than audiences trying to see them.

Plays need some sort of love-interest, or at least a hero-interest, and the modern dramatist has ruefully realized that the only men he is likely to see in his theatre are the call-boy, a nonagenarian scene-shifter and an occasional adolescent dramatic student.

Manfully shouldering the burden, playwrights have written plays for all women, or all children, or all very old men. The trouble with plays for very old men is that being rather feeble they all need very old understudies, and rehearsals are apt to turn into arguments on the merits and demerits of Henry Irving and Beerbohm Tree—apart from the fact that they usually forget their lines and often their theatre. It is a sad sight to see an aged Thespian walking truculently round the Odeon Cinema demanding the stage-door of the Alhambra.

A new technique of play-writing is, however, slowly being evolved. Primarily there is the "voice off." By this method the call-boy can represent any number of male characters, all of whom must have a very definite reason for not appearing—apart from the very obvious reason that they have all been called up. Tradesmen are easy; it would be lese-majesty in any case for them to come into the drawing-room. Young officers visiting the house can always have lost their trousers and be bashful about appearing. Fathers can be in their studies brooding, and younger sons can always be having sulks in the attic. As long as the call-boy is well rehearsed, a series of off-stage shouts from all



"Haven't you got the garage key, dear?"

"No, dear—I thought YOU'd got it, dear."

"But I thought you KNEW I hadn't got it, dear."

"No, dear—I thought you knew I thought YOU'd got it, dear."

"Of course not, dear—I simply thought you knew I thought you MUST have known I hadn't got it, dear."

directions can convey the impression that there is a house full of men, who could be seen but don't care to be.

Another method is by using the actual dialogue. Mother and daughter can describe the daughter's young man at length and can spend some time explaining just how he proposed, or just how he didn't. Or a lady barrister and client can go over in detail the whole of the husband's marital life, infidelity and character.

Alternatively, well-known male stars can be induced to record a part while on leave. Thereby a tender love-scene may be played with the man just out of sight. A balcony scene played with only the balcony showing is a good way of using this method.

It is all a question of educating the public. As soon as they can be induced

to forget what a male actor looks like in the flesh the go-ahead producer will be able to get to work with shadows behind curtains, dummies worked by wires and eventually, no doubt, the male characters just painted on the scenery. After all, the theatre is supposed to be art, and something has to be left to the imagination.

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Happy Month

"During Advent a series of four sermons by the Rev. — will be published in 'The —' as follows:

December 5—DEATH.

December 12—JUDGMENT.

December 19—PURGATORY.

December 24—ETERNITY.

To avoid disappointment order your copy now."—Church Journal.

Shakespeare Inspects the Guard.

THE trumpet-echoes wane. The hour has come
When to the custody of armed guards
We trust our fitful lives, those slender threads
Which one day must be severed, come what may.
Upon this reckoning I bid you stand,
Each with his weapon's butt upon the ground
Facing the front. Which, having been performed,
I will approach and scan you.

(He begins to inspect, and addresses a soldier.)
Ah, what is here? Break rank—retreat a pace
And knit more firmly this offending brace.

Your habits, boots and martial leatherings
I have inspected; and it will be meet
For you to sheathe your several glittering blades—
Those symbols of a silent stealthy fate
To hostile bodies—and to port your arms;
Expose their finer workings to the view
Lest haply they be tainted with a rust
Which, like the creeping fungus on a tree—
Or some vile maggot at the apple's heart—
Will soon o'erwhelm and ruin.

(He addresses another soldier.)
Ten thousand devils take you! Sergeant, approach!
There is a dullness in the vital shaft
Of this man's Enfield! Prick him down, Sergeant.

(Aside)
Who's to be stick-man? What a fearful game!
To me the ensanguined fools look all the same.

It now remains
To single out the smartest one to-day
From this parade. And therefore do I bid
The second yeoman from the right stand forth.



"And what were YOU in civvy life, Doctor?"

What blaze of brass and leather work is there!
You have outstripped all other fellow men
In vying with the brightest point of heaven—
Yea, the great sun himself. It is our wish
That you should slumber through the livelong night
Whose starry watches are to be the care
Of those less fortunate. Therefore stand forth.
March to the right, take post and tarry there
Until such time as we have cleared the square.

Duties, I cozen you let swords be drawn
And mounted firmly on the muzzles' mouth.
By such an act you will be proof against
All hapless vagrants who encroach upon
The confines of the camp. By such an act
You show the might of Britain's martial power,
That well-spring from whose source we know will rise
Th'engulfing torrent which, in fearful spate;
Will crush our foes. But soft! the day-star sinks;
See where the last low shafts of parting light
Are beckoning the beasts to fold and byre.
Now all is still. Close up your gaping ranks.
Commander, take your post, and for the rest,
Let vigilance be your watchword. So begone
Off to his duties each and everyone.
Be stout of heart, stand firm, your spirits rally.
The night is long that never finds reveille.

Molesworth the Fashionplate

Contains: Diary of toffs, swanks, swizzes, bishes, bonks,
plus fores and various bits of HARD CHEDDAR.

Nov. 12. St. Cypranes is still at st. guthrums you kno
where we moved after tough bombing of all latin books.
All record weeds are still here i.e. mr trimp (headmaster)
mrs trimp deaf master molesworth 2 and tough boy who
is bats he thinks he super cowboy RED NED. Also super
weed five star selexion mr dashwood (st. guthrums head-
master) chiz chiz chiz. Toda is memorable as absolute
new bug arive. We are doing weedy french with deaf
master who sa get on with next exercise rats do not love
cats. Peason sa gorblimey why should they (conduc mark
"slang") when sudenly door open. Grate confusion as
deaf master hide newspaper and all boys remove penknives
dinky toys and liberry books with utmost speed. mr trimp
then reveal record boy who is jolly old he is 14 and
wear plus fores gosh. mr trimp sa cold snap will brake
tomow.

Nov. 13. Ice in all toothmugs.

Nov. 14. molesworth 2 see record new bugs plus fores
he is amazed and dive bomb them mightily. New bug do
not get ratty he sa molesworth 2 is a mere tick cheers
cheers cheers he haf hit the nail on the head. All juniors
and weeds of plarstercene class are also amazed at plus
fores and folow new bug sucking thumbs weedily. I
dercide to tough them up and charge full tilt but they are
record weedy chiz they larff like girlies and when i chass
them they sa boo sossage from behind trees chiz.
fotherington-tomas actually pedal up on fairy-cycle and
sa beast. Maybe i am losing my grip.

Nov. 15. New bug appere with green pork pie hat.
Gosh.

Nov. 16. Pork pie hat draw record crowds all plarster-
cene class also tough cowboy who is amazed. He sa pard
that lid look plum loco to me but then see 3 rooks and rune

away. He sa rooks are trailing him he is bats but what can you expect with a name like cecil winkle. molesworth 2 now zoom up and sa gosh what a hat (tact) but everone else haf good maners and only stare with mouths open.

Nov. 17. st guthrums still wonky and woobly and chimibly pots crash mightily all day. Toda there is special dancing class chiz chiz chiz weedy old geyser drive up in cranky old grid and make us do weedy things i.e. i haf to rumba with fotherington-tomas chiz chiz chiz. Old geyser leap mightily and mr dashwood stroke moustash thortfully he sa not bad eh trimp old boy, gad what a chassis etc. Geyser then do super leap floors tremble house shuders and piktire releaf of ladysmith zoom to ground bonk. molesworth 2 then offer to pla his famous piece faire bells on piano and i order all boys to shelter as this far more dangerous than bomb. Fortunately tea bell ring and he zoom away at 200 m.p.h.

Nov. 18. Speak to record new bug he sa dancing not a bad show but persnally he simply adored good swing, jive or jiterbug. He sa he haf simply marvelous evening at savoy in the vac and molesworth 2 sa crikey fancy dancing with girls gosh. New bug sa certainly and molesworth 2 repli coo what a woper and rune away with pork pie hat. See tough cowboy slinking among trees the rooks are still hounding him.

Nov. 19. Boy with spektacles you kno the swot who got the skol approche mr dashwood in break with folowing on piece of paper e.g. $(a-b) \times (y-z)$ but mr dashwood sa he haf not time now he will give answer tomow.

Nov. 20. mr dashwood deep in thort. He seem worred.

Nov. 21. Highly delicate situation arise toda as we haf weedy crocodile with deaf master and meet super local tuough boy dirty pete famous for gang of oiks. Deaf master see gang at end of road and talk sudenly with deep interest about robin redbreasts chiz he haf not forgotten vilage tuough who shout garn big boots and thro walnut at him. Aktuallly dirty pete see famous pork pie hat and is dumb-founded until peason make long nose (rude). Tuough voley of stones folow also WORDS and they sa feeble things e.g. ladeeda cecil and yar frankenstein. Cheers cheers new bug leave crock and deal dirty pete wizard wam on snitch and all better boys join super scrap with blows and curses. fotherington-tomas then skip up weedily and sa to er is human to forgive divine which he get from book of Beatiful Thorts but he only get wam and rune away blubing also dirty pete cheers cheers he blub he will tell his ma. Deaf master still talk to swot about redbreasts and feeble little creatures of nature but think he must haf noticed.

Nov. 22. Swot catch mr dashwood who sneke through algy answer book he is still thortful.

Nov. 23. Decide to be SWANK like new bug.

Nov. 24. molesworth 2 zoom up he sa he is an ariel dog fight but he is gnerous he will let me be messerschimt 109F as long as i promise honour bright to haf blak smoke poring from port engine and becom lost to view beneathe cloudws. i sa absolutely no fains twice as i haf dercided to become a swank. molesworth 2 sa don't care so boo and shoot down matron skool gardner 5 new bugs and robin in flames and return safely to his base (dog kenel). Absolutely drift up to sick room and sa what ho mato how about puttin a monogram on my vests my dear but she only take tempera-ture and give me white powder. Nuisance. Also make rude remarks about vests i.e. they are not fit for beste of field to wear. i repli molesworth 2 haf got to haf a crack at them yet and with this riposte ooze down to coco and biskits.

Nov. 25. Rooks still trailing tuough cowboy he sa the net is drawing in.

Nov. 26. French weedy french deaf master ask feeble



questions about mama rat but SWANK break rule of class e.g. to sa i dunno sir. He answer in french and deaf master is amazed. SWANK deliver grate thort: Masters are a necessary evil and deaf master give him one mark i do not think his hearing improves. Wizard high tea frizzly sossages all boys guzle absolutely and take record bites especially molesworth 2 who make important statement viz where sossages are concerned i belive in scorched earth policy.

Nov. 28. mr dashwood sa how about a-b? he is visably disapointed when swot shake head.

Nov. 29. Continue tuough swanking and absolutely brush hair. Peason sa how about sloshing match but i sa no thanks old man not just at the moment. Unfortunately molesworth 2 hapen to be by on way to steal biskits and he larff like anything. However sa how about another helping of sardines my dear to gerturde (maid) and she aktuallly bring 3 complete with tails cheers cheers and molesworth 2 is very impressed.

Nov. 30. Stern lekture from mr trimp becos all skool call gerturde my dear.

Dec. 1. Rooks are closing in on cowboy.

Dec. 2. Find tuough cowboy lying on floor in big skool his eyes are closed. He sa come closer molesworth they got me take this and give me 3 dinky toys. He then expire until Peason go by with compass then come to life agane. He then want dinky toys back chiz that is the way of the world. SWANK sa i simply must come and sta with his pater in the vac or would it bore me to tears. Can't help it the beste come out in me and i sa yes it jolly well would bore me and call him weedy swankpot. He administer sound blipping and toughness but worth it.

Dec. 3. Swot sa wot about the answer to mr dashwood. mr dashwood sa of course of course $a-b \times y$. When swot shake head mr dashwood give him super blip cheers cheers he haf got the right answer at last.

Dec. 4. Boo to rooks cowboys swankpots and all boys. the end.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"Rabbit, Sir?"

Out of Africa

[*"Ex Africa semper aliquid novi."*—Pliny.]

A SAGE who studied Africa
Wrote words long proven true,
That from the heart of Africa
Came ever something new.
It might be cities built on gold,
Great beasts and marvels manifold,
Or secrets fatal to behold,
But ever out of Africa
Fresh winds of portent blew.

Our sires went out to Africa,
To learn by blood and tears,
And left behind in Africa
The harvest of hard years.
They fought for gold, and found it killed,
For power, and saw their fields untilled,
For brotherhood—and wrath lay stilled,
And peace came out of Africa
To conquer all our fears.

But yesterday in Africa
A fool, with envious eyes,
Rode roughshod over Africa
And fouled her burning skies.

So anger woke, and war-drums beat,
And fear went forth on fire-winged feet,
And armies faced the flies and heat,
As long ago in Africa,
Before our ways grew wise.

The Nemesis of Africa
Has laid him by the heels
Who had not learnt that Africa
Consumes the hand that steals.
Down roads of triumph proudly planned,
Where Mammon's wreathed memorials stand
To one more empire built on sand,
Doomed legions flee through Africa
Before the chariot-wheels.

New strength pours out of Africa;
Wings beat above the foam.
The lion voice of Africa
Roars further north than Rome.
Let dupe and despot hear that sound,
For giants tread her ancient ground
From free-born empire's furthest bound,
Steel, forged in fires of Africa,
To drive the judgment home!



THE REAPER

Little Talks

WILL you join the A.A.A.A.?
What's that?
 The All Aid to America Association.

You're raving.
 No. For once I propose to be ahead of the advanced thinkers.

I don't follow.
 Sooner or later America will be at war with Japan. And the moment she is, the same people will start the same yap, I bet you.

Sorry. Which people? Which yap?
 The people who are so busy yapping "More Aid for Russia! Send 'em all the tanks we've got!"

I don't. I say "Keep 'em here and invade Europe!"

All right. But they say both. Well, this time it will be "Plucky little America is fighting your battles. What are all your battleships doing, messing about in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean? Send them through the Panama Canal and show you're not a Man of Munich!"

What on earth has Munich got to do with it?

Well, you know the sort of twaddle they talk. There's one solemn ass who makes the same speech every week-end. He says: "The presence in the Government of several of Mr. Chamberlain's men causes grave doubts whether—"

"As to" whether, surely?
 Yes—but I was translating him into English. "—grave doubts whether the Government are really in earnest about Russia."

Well, there's something in that.
 But you might just as well say that the presence of Stalin and Molotoff in the Russian Government was causing grave doubts whether Russia was really in earnest about us!

How? I don't—
 Well, after all, in August 1939 dear old Russia (Stalin and Molotoff up) did about the biggest Munich in history. As a matter of fact, it was much worse than—

Well, can you blame her?
 I could. But I'm not. That's the point. I'm so sick of the people who can't say a good word for Russia without heaving half a brick at us.

But, after all, if only we'd handled Russia a bit more cleverly before the—
 There you go again!

If we'd sent Anthony Eden over instead of that Civil Servant—

I don't believe it would have made the smallest difference. Did it do any good sending Anthony Eden to Hitler?

No. But that's different.
 Oh, no. Chaps like Stalin and Hitler don't decide about going to war or not simply because they meet a nice Old Etonian.

What about the Old Wykehamist?
 Cripps, you mean? Cripps, I believe, has done very well. But he didn't bring Russia into the war. The only man clever enough to do that was Hitler—the blazing ass.

There's something in that. But I don't think you ought to go about saying that Russia did a Munich.

I don't. I never mention it until I hear some All-for-Russia boy abusing our blokes. Now we're all in it together I don't care how many Munichs anybody did.

But, old boy, it's quite a different thing.

Why?
In 1939 Russia wasn't ready.

Quite.
And she still thought she could trust Hitler.

Quite.
The moment she found she couldn't she went at him tooth and nail.

Quite. Or rather—not quite!
What d'you mean?
 Isn't that precisely the case for our own Munich?

Well, I suppose it's something like it.
 But you'll never hear any All-for-Russia boy admitting it.

But it's different, really.
 There is a difference, certainly. The difference is that we didn't wait to go to war till we were ourselves attacked. We had a shot at helping the other chap.

Poland? Huh! A lot of good we did them!
 Anyhow, we didn't stab them in the back.

Now, then!
 Sorry. I agree. This is not the sort of talk. But then, you chaps will start it. Anyhow—

I never—
 Anyhow, you're quite satisfied that Stalin and Molotoff are good enough to run a war against Germany in alliance with us, in spite of their unfortunate relations with Germany?

Of course!
 Well, I agree. So let's have no more about that.

But, my dear chap, the more a chap's been deceived by another chap, the more likely he is to hate the other chap—

I agree. I agree. No more. Anyhow, you'll join the A.A.A.A.?

Certainly.

How d'you think the old war's going?
I think, myself, we're at the turn of the tide.

What on earth do you mean by that?
Well, you know what I mean, old chap.
 I know that all sorts of people insist on talking about "the tide" doing this and that, but I can't say I ever know what they mean. One fellow even went so far as to say that "we should turn the tide in the end." "We," mark you.

I suppose he was thinking of a corner—or a long lane, or something.

No, he was thinking that the Government had control of the tide, like everything else. Well, let's see where we are. You say we're at the turn of the tide. All right. It's slack water. Which way is the tide going to go now?

Our way, of course.
 Yes, but which way is that? I mean, is the tide about to ebb or flow? And what's it been doing all this time?

Well, I suppose it's been ebbing.
Yes. And now it's going to flood. Flow.
You know—Shakespeare: "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune—"

I know. A most nonsensical observation.

But why?
 Because it would have been just as true to say "taken at the ebb." Rather more so.

Oh, well—
 It's all very well to say "Oh, well." But, as a matter of fact, far more ebbs lead on to fortune than flood-tides. Especially in a maritime nation like this. It was the ebb that Drake waited for. It's the ebb that carries our ships and sailors from the ports of England to the four corners of the globe. It's—

A globe hasn't got any corners.
 Sorry. I withdraw. But our explorers, our exporters, our transports—they don't wait for low water; they wait for High Water, when the ebb begins. Then they say "Now we're away."

But if there hadn't been a flood-tide they wouldn't have any water.

That's true enough. But, you see, you said the flood-tide was beginning to go "our" way. And I'm telling you that as likely as not we want to go the other way.

It we want to invade Europe we shall want a flood-tide—over there.

Yes. But if he wants to invade us he'll want a flood-tide—over here. That shows you—

What are we arguing about?
 And, by the way, all you chaps talk



"Sometimes I can't help feeling rather guilty about going to the races in war-time."

as if, once the tide had turned, that was the end of everything. You say the tide has just turned now and is running in—"our way," if you like. Right. But in five or six hours it will be High Water, and the tide will begin to run out again.

But—

Yes, but what happens then? Do we start going down again and the Hun going up? And do you visualize the war as a series of ups and downs equally shared between us and the Huns? If so—

Of course.

All right. But it means that your old "turn of the tide" doesn't mean a thing. Not in the sense you used it—as something final in a kind of way. Anyhow, it's a rotten figure of speech. The tide—

For heaven's sake don't go on about the tide!

You started it. And, as I was saying, anyhow it's a rotten figure of speech. Even if you'd got it technically right it would merely mean that we were availing ourselves of a natural or supernatural force, which carries us to

our destination, without any extra endeavour or performance of our own. Is that how you visualize the war-effort?

You're talking nonsense.

I agree. But the whole conception's nonsense.

Well, chuck it, old chap, and walk across to the pub with me.

Can't, old boy. The tide hasn't turned yet. A. P. H.

o o

Security of Information?

THE fat woman with the basket is first. "Brackwuck," she confides heartily. Then, two soldiers who declaim "Moilsdiggle." Aloof suburban undertaker surprises me with a curt "Glugwort." "Brollyudly," says the mother-in-law; "Duffinsnork," says the pretty young typist; and not to be outdone, "Pimplepotters," gurgles the errand-boy.

There is a pause—tense, expectant. I realize abruptly it is my turn. "St. Augustine's Crescent," I hurriedly emit. "Eh?" "Saint Augustine's

Crescent," I endeavour to enounce, beetrooting as the soldiers grin, the pretty young typist stares aghast, and even my friend Harry disowns me by gazing fixedly out of the window.

"Oh, SLOPSTROP!" is the withering rejoinder.

In my humiliation I have yet one shred of consolation. My friend Harry is committed I know to "Chislington Gardens"—how will he fare with that?

The scoundrel—a cowardly evasion. Blandly he says "A tuppenny." The conductress smiles and unhesitatingly hands him his ticket.

o o

Complaint

WHENE'ER the Powers That Be disclose
Some stirring news which they suppose,
Apparently, that no one knows,

It always seems to me that I'm
The sole soul guilty of the crime
Of not having known it all the time.

A. W. B.

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, December 2nd.—House of Commons: Mr. Churchill Hands Out an Instalment of Toil and Sweat.

Wednesday, December 3rd.—House of Commons: More Toil and Sweat.

Thursday, December 4th.—House of Commons: Still More T. and S.

Tuesday, December 2nd.—Centuries ago (it seems) Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL rose up in the House of Commons and, in his first speech as Prime Minister, promised the nation nothing but blood, tears, toil and sweat. The nation, which, in current phraseology, can certainly "take it" when occasion demands, metaphorically tightened its belt, set its teeth, and accepted the grim catalogue as its lot.

Blood and tears there have been for all too many.

Toil and sweat for . . . not enough, yet.

So it was that Mr. CHURCHILL came down to the House again to-day, this time to ask that a full quota of Toil and Sweat be given by all, irrespective of age or sex or class. Of Blood, said he, mercifully little had yet been demanded by the gods of war. Of Tears there had been blessedly few. But of Toil and Sweat—amply given though they had been—there must be



A TRIAL FLIGHT

Mr. ELLIS SMITH with his newly-won wings

no end, till the horrors of war rolled away and peace reigned once more.

A grave and serious WINSTON CHURCHILL it was, with hardly a glimmer of the Puckish humour which

usually adorns and brightens his public utterances, even on the grimmest of topics.

Major TOM DUGDALE, Deputy Government Chief Whip, set the stage with due solemnity by introducing a new Member (for Hampstead) with a stately dignity and precision that has surely never been surpassed since Regency times.

In this atmosphere of calm expectancy Mr. CHURCHILL "went to it" with an incisive directness that would have done no discredit to popular journalism.

"I have to call upon the nation for a further degree of sacrifice and exertion," was his opening sentence; it was also an admirable summary of his speech.

Crises in variety there had been, and now, happily, some of the most worrying of them were past. The Man-power Crisis took the stage. This, curiously, was something for congratulation—for it meant that our production plans were now well on the way to success, and we must prepare for the surge of munitions that would come in 1942, and for the still greater one in 1943.

We must see too that there were men and women to wield the weapons their skilled brothers and sisters had forged and would forge. The period of fighting well-armed men with arms that were anything but adequate was over. From now on "the Hun" would feel the sharpness of the weapons whose searing teeth had torn freedom from so many little nations.

A low cheer, as though through the set teeth of the tensely-listening Members, broke the silence.

The House would have to make a harder turn of the Screw of Sacrifice, and all the 46,750,000 people in the country must do their bit, great or small, according to their capacity.

Conscription age for men would go up from 41 to 50, and men might be "directed" into that great standby against invasion, the Home Guard. One million seven hundred thousand men that notable organization already contained, forming a deadly nationwide hornets' nest into which an enemy parachutist might drop.

The Home Guard must not be allowed to decay or dwindle, and compulsory drills would ensure against such a calamity. This for the Boys of the Old Brigade; for those of from 16 to 18, there would be registration, so that they too might be preserved from decay and kept ready to take their part in the fight for their heritage.

Like the powder-monkeys of NELSON'S

day, boys would be ready to fight, as junior members of the Home Guard. Women too would do their very considerable bit, with compulsion in the background to deal with the few slackers there always were.



"TO ARMS!"

The debate that followed was not distinguished, except for a powerful speech from Mr. "JIM" GRIFFITHS, from the Labour Benches, in which he (rather shockingly) amended his Party's slogan and demanded "Socialism in War Time." The House was too dazzled by his eloquence to be dazed by his heresy.

Most of the women Members—in tasteful civilian dress—took part in the debate, warmly welcoming the plan to build up the ranks of the Women-in-Uniform.

Wednesday, December 3rd.—Returning like a giant somewhat refreshed, the Commons said a great deal more on the difficult subjects of man-and woman-power, production and consumption.

There used to be a rule against what was rather delightfully called "vain repetition." The precise degree of vainness (or should it be vanity?) is of course a matter for the Speaker, but of the repetition there can be no doubt at all.

The speeches from the Labour Benches boiled down to the extremely simple proposition put forward by Mr. GRIFFITHS: Take the bodies if you will, but take the wealth too.

Members said that, in all sorts of keys and with all sorts of embroideries and embellishments, all day.

Even Question-time, usually the show-hour for the bright boys, failed to produce very noticeable scintillation.

Major MONTAGUE LYONS came nearest to brightness (the hard polish of irony) by demanding from Colonel LLEWELLIN, of the War Transport Ministry, a promise that the annual farce of declaring that there will be no extra trains for holiday-makers, followed by an elaborate schedule of extra trains when the rush starts, would not be repeated.

Sensing the topical Christmas touch about that phrase "annual farce," Colonel LLEWELLIN gave due notice that, whatever might be the perennial athletic abilities of Charlie's Aunt, extra trains would positively NOT run this Yuletide.

And he looked as though he meant it.

Thursday, December 4th.—Quite pre-war excitement to-day—with a division and everything to make it seem home-like. The long wrangle about conscription continued, with the Labour Party agreeing to all the Government's plans but demanding that they go further and nationalize the major industries.

Mr. SHINWELL, in the somewhat unaccustomed rôle of official spokesman of the party, delivered a speech which did not seem to delight some other Members of his Front Bench, and Mr. ERNEST BEVIN, Minister of Labour, was at least equally vehement in his support of the plans.

At the end of it all there was a division and the Government plans were approved by 326 votes to 10 after an amendment demanding nationalization had been rejected with 40 Labour rebels supporting it.

I Schpy!

Herr Nasenparke lectures Fifth Columnists on "How to Get About."

NOW when you are going to-and-fro, with the notion of making kontakt and getting-to-know-one-another, it may not always be the right thing to insist that taxis be at your disposals. Nevertheless the local conditions and the tastes of the kontakt, it is also, I may tell you, a matter of the expenses of the Reich. Greater Germany has not so much in the coffer that sche wishes to squander on road transport when it might be as well for the Gestapo to elude the counter-Gestapo by going to earth in the Metropolitan and thus slink from place to place below the surface, at a cheaper price at that, I say. So, should you seek whether to invade

the suburbs or sneak along Soho, no matter, take your twopence and travel belowwards.

Of course I should remind you, there is the omnibus, that is to say that you may leap upon the public vehicles above-ground, charging only a penny or two to secret funds, and be transposed in the direction which you envy, yet if you do, be all ears, without saying anything sinister when addressed.

Itschike is more difficult, if not in uniform (Britisch or Alliable), but no reason why not try and save expenses for the Reichsbank, eh? Itschike is done like this:—Remain, I tell you,

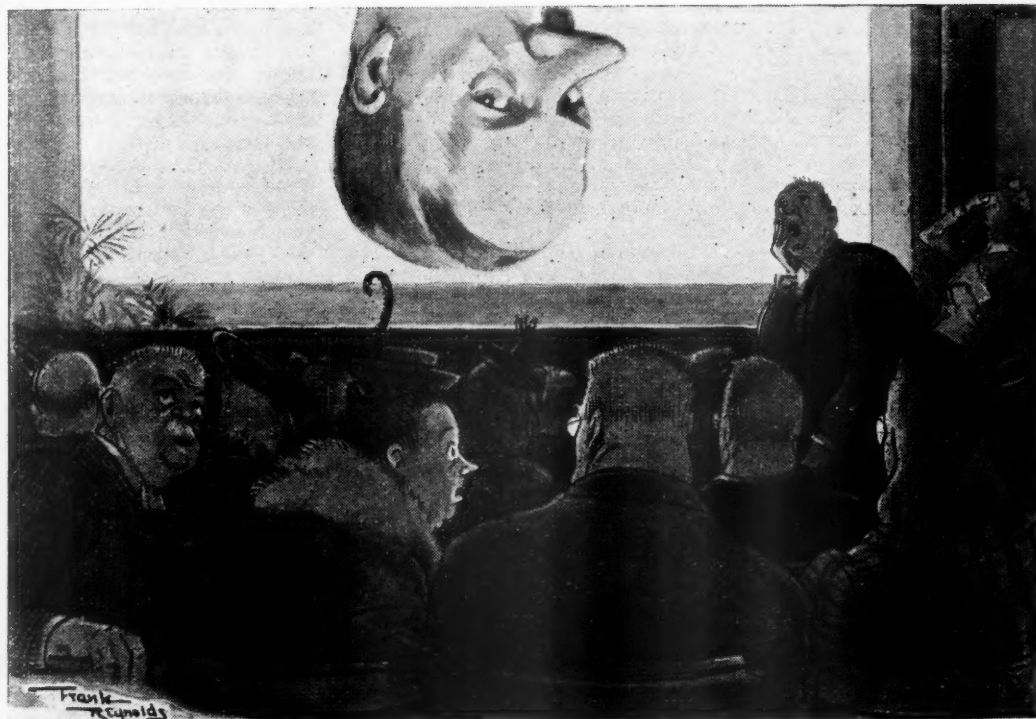
upon the kerb, smiling anxious along the pathway until there come perhap a motor. Then lift the hand and put the thumb on high, allowing to be known the direction in which you might be willing to proceed. At such a sight, so will, I hope, the driver stopp and then—on you go! Hora!

Of course again you may, it is possible, have a bi- or tri-cycle, the more is the better, and good luck to you, then schall you charge nothing to the Greater Reich, and gad about as gaily as maybe, even cutting a dasch in your spare time.

If none of these, then it is schank's poni for you, I say, poor chaps!



"And here is Sir William Brawnside, who, despite a severe cold, has nobly left his bed to address a few words to you this evening."



CALAMITY

The Sacrifice

Or The Patriotic Mother

SOME years ago my old mother startled me by remarking, "You know, I've kept all your letters, ever since you were at school." She added, "In case you're famous; useful for your biography."

I had one of those nasty feelings in the pit of the stomach. I realized only too well the sort of letters the little beast, Smith Minor, writes home; the sort of letters the impecunious undergraduate writes, the young man in love writes, the hard-up middle-aged family man writes, to his mother.

Dejected, I thought, Well, perhaps I'd better give up taking steps to be famous.

Then a queer sort of satisfaction began to steal into my soul. I had often wondered how it was that the letters of all sorts of people did get preserved, so that anyone who looked like living and dying a nonentity and in the end somehow turned out a winner provided ample material for

his biographer. I had often felt a little sad at the reflection that none of *my* correspondents would have bothered

to preserve my pearls. Well, my letters to my mother had contained precious few pearls, but at least *one* person was taking steps to preserve me from oblivion.

I began to write her better letters. They became epigrammatic, witty, had sometimes almost the quality of polished prose poems. I feel sure the old lady has often been staggered, when, after learning about Amelia's in-growing toe-nail and Baby Jill's hiccups, she has come upon some profoundly ironic remark about politicians, or (of late) has been enlightened by a brilliant prophecy as to the future course of the war. I introduced searching reflections on Art, Literature, Music. My letters became such that a man need have had no shame of them if corresponding with a distinguished casual acquaintance. They had the light touch. Also they became much more frequent. In fact I was reviving the lost art of letter-writing.

I know my mother has often felt it that, owing to my being well over military age and having a game leg, I am unlikely to do anything very

US AND THE U.S.A.

FROM America comes news of further steps to share the burden of the British Navy in the Battle of the Atlantic. Remember, it is to the sacrifices of these sailors that you owe many of the comforts of civilized life which you still enjoy.

In return, will you not contribute to the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND? A gift to this Fund enables you to express your gratitude in tangible form. You owe it to our sailors to see that they are well provided with extra comforts this winter. Donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

actively glorious in the war. The other day, on one of my regular visits, she said tentatively and tactfully, manifestly hoping she was not hurting my feelings, "You won't mind, will you, if I destroy all your letters—waste paper—salvage—pulp . . . ?"

* * * * *

It is a sacrifice; all those epigrams, all that wit . . . Still, I shall be able to go on now with an easy mind, taking steps to become famous; Smith Minor will be decently buried. And perhaps the biggest step to fame I shall ever have taken will be to have provided, say, a couple of tanks.

Besides . . .
"In any case," my mother had added, "most of your letters are indecipherable."

o o

The Hand of Man

POLITELY, if unwillingly, I fell in with my hostess's pre-warlike plan of going to see the Caves at three; I am not very good about sights.

It was with apprehension that I heard the turnstile click behind us and accepted tickets from the uninterested blonde who went back at once to her novel.

The placards promising surprise and delight, and the expensive mahogany case guarding elaborately-labelled bits of grey bones and lumps of misshapen rock were only to be expected. And I knew how it would be. As we entered the black maw of the cave by neatly cemented steps with a handrail on either side, the electric light was snapped on; as we set out on the carefully gravelled path the strange labyrinth we were in was familiarly explained, beauty was laboriously pointed out, awe anticipated and wonder catered for, the fears and struggles of a million years were dismissed in a facetious phrase, the grotesquery of an underground existence passed over with a joke.

With the continued comments of the guide and the whispers and giggles of the sightseers I felt my irritation rising. I tried to linger behind to take in the astonishment of this hidden world, to touch the queer timeless ooze, to listen to the ceaseless drip. But the rule was haste. Half a minute for the neolithic skull, a passing titter at twenty thousand years of death.

The party moved towards the way out. Why were we leaving behind us an experience untasted, an emotion unfelt? Was there nothing man's hand

did not destroy? Wasn't he content with ravaging the face of the earth? Must the silence of ages be disturbed by his chatter?

"Scuse me a mo', ladies," the guide said with a wink, "gents too, but I always say the ladies do like to see a bit of life."

I was turning in rebellion to go, when I saw what he was pointing at, and it made me catch my breath.

The huge arc lamp, lately put in by the Corporation to show off their exhibit to the full, was entwined and curled about with the brilliant transparent green of a sturdy hartstongue fern; a patch of fresh young moss surrounded the efficient glaring light.

Why, the light and warmth from

man's practical new invention had touched a billion years of death into life! In another billion years, when the Ice-Age again stole over the earth, might he creep underground once more and with his little bulb and switch defy the receding sun?

My brain reeled. I went out without noticing the fans of picture postcards, the cats carved out of stalagmite, the stalactite ash-trays, the proffered guide-books, the waiting queue. I couldn't be in more of a muddle.

o o

Easy

"Reliable Person for sleeping only, no other duties; Wilmslow."—*Local Paper.*



"Wot's inside them rissoles?"

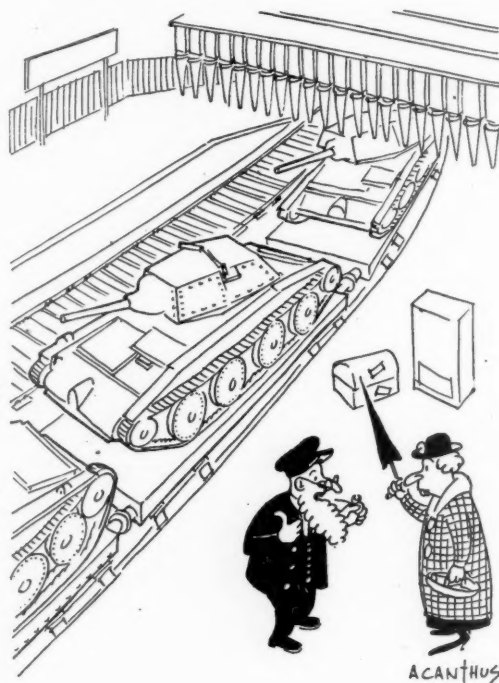
"Same as wot was outside 'em yesterday."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Showman's Story

IN *Cock-a-Doodle-Do* (DENT, 15/-) Mr. C. B. COCHRAN might seem to be crowing. But his book of reminiscences is as candid a record of what went wrong as of what went right. He has always obeyed the Tennysonian precept about loving the highest when we see it, but his own unquenchable appetite for life has added the condition that the highest should be understood in the broadest sense. Accordingly he has been ready to deal in all things from high tragedy to performing fleas, though it is certain that his fleas would be the authentic "aces" of their antic tribe. He has not only marshalled the mightier talents of boxing and wrestling and rodeo, but has been the proud presenter of DUSE and has striven to establish Mr. GORDON CRAIG on a stage where that sage could freely practise what he preached concerning drama. Mr. COCHRAN's chronicles are those of a complete man who has made an enraptured and inclusive study of the whole range of the human rare-show. He has never, it seems, stopped long to calculate costs, bravely assuming that the public would accept his own valuations when he paid a high price for an article or an artist. If he had not been so gaily confident about all that took his fancy, he would not have been Mr. CHARLES B. COCHRAN. On the other hand, he might have been a millionaire. His great mistake in life was not to go to Aberdeen University and take a degree in economics. Then he would indeed have been irresistible. This is the third book of Mr. COCHRAN's reminiscences, and it deals with such recent adventures as the first colossal success of



"Moscow only, Lady. Stow-on-the-Wold next train."

MISS ELISABETH BERGNER and the comparative failure of BARRIE's *The Boy David*. For the curious here is a personally conducted trip through the stage-doors of half a century. The list of names at the end is the marble-index of a mind forever voyaging through strange seas of showmanship and very far from alone. To be at large in this book is to meet everybody who is somebody and very few who are nobodies. What the various artists have done may have been queer, but they were the best at their jobs. Mr. COCHRAN is addicted to the summits, and mountaineers occasionally have falls. Few have restarted the journey with more immediate bravery, and, though now physically handicapped, he will be back as soon as may be on his artistic peak-bagging. There are some lively photographs of the great gay world and its "lovelies," and a reprint of some tributary verses by A. P. H., which are a tribute indeed.

Mr. Morgan Quite Contrary

MR. CHARLES MORGAN calls it *The Empty Room* (MACMILLAN, 5/-), and it contains: one surgeon turned scientist while the war lasts, one legal historian, one wife missing, presumed murdered, and a girl who hates the mother she has never seen. Outside the austere immensities of the philosophical mind it would seem even a little crowded. In fact Mr. MORGAN's theme—of spiritual regeneration when all seems lost—is given an extraordinary and almost ludicrously melodramatic illustration. The lovers who parted twenty years ago parted only because the lady perversely wanted to do something she didn't want to do. There is nothing against this in nature, but it is difficult to swallow in print; and so the philosophical novelette is founded on a piece of artifice that would be hardly tolerable in an ordinary one. The defect is unfortunately irredeemable. No amount of lofty thinking, pure phrases, and sometimes penetrating analysis of character and motive can retrieve the day. And indeed, but for the unforgettable lapse, there is much to applaud in the book, especially its recognition of the abyss of unshared associations and experience which those who love best are sometimes powerless to cross. (We will not mention again the suspicions of murder which poor *Henry Rydal* accommodatingly starts for the sake of dramatic tension.) But it is only in the interstices of the plot that one sees Mr. MORGAN at his ease and wholly unembarrassing—when, for instance, he sets himself to express in a single sentence some emotion deep in people's hearts in time of trouble, when he can recognize, dissect and account for such a national characteristic as the "stubborn and ancestral madness" with which the English prepared to resist and, if necessary, wear down invasion.

Irish-Edwardian

To try to recapture the exact timbre of an unhappy adolescence, checking deliberately any mellow retrospective judgments, is inevitably to show yourself disgruntled rather than critical. And there is an ungraciousness—in view of the conditions she has imposed upon herself, a necessary ungraciousness—about Miss ENID STARKIE's autobiography which renders *A Lady's Child* (FABER, 15/-) a disheartening as well as a tragically illuminating book. The STARKIE family, being Anglo-Irish and traditionally accommodating over religion, naturally found themselves at variance with the mere Irish. Moreover, the writer's father was a member of the English Government and her mother's life was devoted to the "princely entertaining" it was felt his position demanded. Their family suffered from a particularly cramping variant of Catholicism and a



"EXCUSE ME, BUT IS THERE AN AIR-RAID ON?"

"YES, I THINK SO."

"I'M MUCH OBLIGED. MY FRIEND'S UP FROM THE COUNTRY AND HE'S NEVER SEEN ONE."

G. L. Stampa, December 12th, 1917

particularly cramping variant of domesticity; and though Miss STARKIE's intimate delight in French culture—especially that of the modest menage—subsequently showed her that the European tradition had its points, the woman's Oxford of her day, with its equally provincial conventionality and its far more provincial unconventionality, completed the spiritual shipwreck Ireland had begun. In the end she proceeds defiantly to the Sorbonne; and one hopes that this obviously congenial adventure will furnish a second and a happier volume.

Beggar-My-Neighbour

The tragic history that lies behind the landless village labourer has been used by Miss DOREEN WALLACE (in the manner of SHAKESPEARE out of HOLINSHED) to inspire a fine novel of Georgian rural life. With Suffolk for its setting,

Green Acres (COLLINS, 9/6) depicts three generations of benevolent squires and three generations of labourers—the squires fairly static, the labourers swiftly passing from owners with common rights to disinherited victims of the Enclosure Acts and finally to rioters and convicts. Because three successive *De Winters*—Charles, Giles and Kit—are champions of their men, it does not follow that their own estates escape the fate that absentee and prodigal landlords and pluralist parsons bring on the whole neighbourhood. The trio are in the thick of the clash, and their womenfolk too; and if their creator has tended to stress type rather than individual, well, the book stands or falls by its opposing factions and the rhetoric of their leaders, and from a dramatic point of view it undoubtedly stands. More might perhaps have been made of the appealing figure of Giles's first love Barbara, who elopes with a poetaster of the Shelley school and lives to repent her gesture.

Reductio ad Absurdum

MINUTE 1

*1st December
To Permanent Secretary*

PLEASE see the enclosed letter to the Minister from Sir Alfred Lugworthy, M.P. It relates to the recent cut in the staff of the Red Herrings Division, the size of which, you will remember, was the subject of Press comment.

The Minister has a high regard for Sir Alfred's judgment (they were at Balliol together) and would like you to look into the matter with a view to effecting a further reduction.

R. M. SUCKLING
Private Secretary to Minister.

Enclosure :

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
30th November

MY DEAR SQUIDGERS,—I have had a word with a few people here—knowledgeable people, mind you—and find that they feel the cut is good but not good enough.

I should have hesitated to say so myself, your reputation being what it is, but in view of the general comment, the least I can do is to let you know.

Ever yours,
BONGO.

MINUTE 2

*2nd December
To Director-General, Red Herrings*

The Minister thinks that we can make further staff economies in your Division.

I need hardly emphasize the need for making the best use of man-power in these times, and shall be glad to discuss when you have investigated.

G. H. INKSPOT
Permanent Secretary.

MINUTE 3

*3rd December
To Deputy Director-General, Red Herrings (Administration)*

The Minister believes we can dispense with more staff. Would you prepare a note?

HUBERT CLODD
Director-General, Red Herrings.

MINUTE 4

*4th December
To Director, Red Herrings (Administration)*

To see Minute 3, and take necessary action.

D. B. PRIMROSE
Deputy Director-General, Red Herrings (Administration).

MINUTE 5

*5th December
To Deputy Director, Red Herrings (Administration)*

As in Minute 3, please.

W. HOLLYHOCK
Director, Red Herrings (Administration).

MINUTE 6

*6th December
To Assistant Director, Red Herrings (Administration)*

Passed to you, please, for action on Minute 3.

R. N. GENTIAN
Deputy Director, Red Herrings (Administration).

MINUTE 7

*7th December
To Deputy Assistant Director, Red Herrings (Administration)*

To prepare a note as in Minute 3.

T. L. MARJORAM
Assistant Director, Red Herrings (Administration).

MINUTE 8

*8th December
To Assistant Director, Red Herrings (Administration)*

The position as I see it is as follows: The Red Herrings Division is divided into four Branches: (1) Administration, (2) Finance, (3) Records, (4) Special.

It is understood that the volume of work passing through the Special Branch has in recent months been negligible, and after putting the question up through A.D./R.H.(S.), D.D./R.H.(S.), D./R.H.(S.), to D.D.G./R.H.(S.), D.A.D./R.H.(S.) is satisfied that the staff of the Special Branch has become redundant.

Since the Treasury ruling that Finance matters relating to Red Herrings are no longer to be Departmentally controlled, there seems to be some ground for concluding that the existence of a Finance Branch is anomalous. D.D.G./R.H.(F.) has been sounded through the proper channel, and agrees.

I have had a meeting with representatives of the Records Branch. I put it to them that if the Finance and Special Branches ceased to exist it would leave only the transactions of the Administration Branch to record. Equally, Administration would have only Records to administer. We would both exist, to put it vulgarly, for the

sole purpose of taking in each other's washing.

I suggest, therefore, that the entire staff of the Red Herrings Division be released for duty elsewhere, leaving, say, a Higher Clerical Officer to hold a watching brief in case anything should happen to boil up.

J. R. LUPIN
Deputy Assistant Director, Red Herrings (Administration).

MINUTE 9

*9th December
To D.D./R.H.(A.)*

The proposal in the last paragraph of the preceding Minute has my support.

T. L. MARJORAM
A.D./R.H.(A.)

MINUTE 10

*10th December
To D./R.H.(A.)*

I entirely concur with the conclusions of Minute 8.

R. N. GENTIAN
D.D./R.H.(A.)

MINUTE 11

*11th December
To D.D.G./R.H.(A.)*

Minute 8 seems to be an eminently sound piece of reasoning.

W. HOLLYHOCK
D./R.H.(A.)

MINUTE 12

*12th December
To D.G./R.H.*

Our redundancy is definitely established.

D. B. PRIMROSE
D.D.G./R.H.(A.)

MINUTE 13

*13th December
To Permanent Secretary*

It is agreed that my Division is redundant.

I should be grateful if you would advise the Minister accordingly.

HUBERT CLODD
D.G./R.H.

MINUTE 14

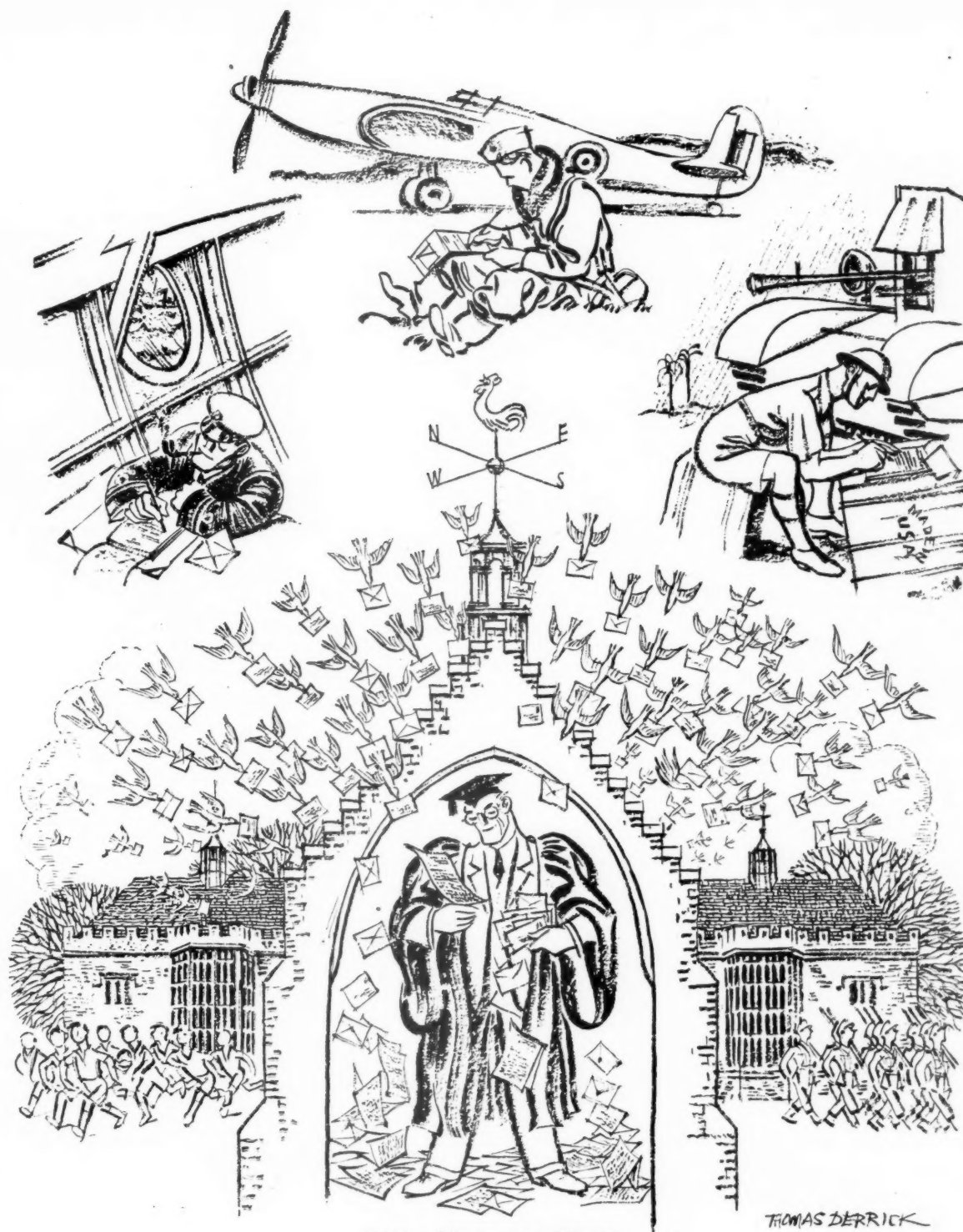
*14th December
To Private Secretary to Minister
To see Minute 13.*

G. H. INKSPOT
Permanent Secretary.

MINUTE 15

*18th December
To Permanent Secretary*

The Minister wrote to Sir Alfred Lugworthy two days ago, and has now



THE HEADMASTER

received a reply. I think you ought to see the correspondence.

R. M. SUCKLING
Private Secretary to Minister.

Enclosure 1:

VICTORY BUILDINGS,
16th December

MY DEAR BONGO,—Thanks very much for your letter of 30th November in which you drew my attention to the redundancy of staff in the Red Herrings Division of my Ministry.

I have now had inquiries made, as a result of which it has been found possible to reduce the strength of the Division to one Higher Clerical Officer, thus releasing a large number of highly trained men for service elsewhere. Please accept my grateful thanks for your most helpful suggestion.

Yours ever,
SQUIDGERS.

Enclosure 2:

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
17th December

MY DEAR SQUIDGERS,—I feel that I should explain that the letter to which you refer was addressed to you in error.

It was one of two which came back from the typist together. On the one intended for you (an invitation to lunch, which I hope you will accept some other time) I was ass enough to put "Dear Goldstein": on Goldstein's I idiotically wrote "My dear Squidgers"—I can only say in apology that I was very rushed at the time.

I am glad, however, that you have found the letter helpful.

Ever yours,
BONGO.

P.S.—Goldstein is my tailor.

The Colonel and the Cadet

LAST June the Colonel took over command of an Infantry Officers' Cadet Training Unit then occupying a requisitioned school building in Mundham High Street. The appointment dating from half-way through the usual course of training, he decided to enter on his new duties with as little fuss as possible, and to this end went down in mufti, driving his own car and timing things so as to arrive after "Lights Out."

Five miles from his destination he was stopped by a cadet in uniform. "You going Mundham way?" he was asked politely. "I am," said the Colonel. "Jump in."

As soon as the car was on the move again the cadet apologized for having had to ask for a lift, but explained that he was in the devil of a fix. "I've been on the river with my sister," he said, "and I've got no late pass."

"Really!" said the Colonel.

"She had a friend with her," the cadet went on, as if that fact alone explained everything.

Being a man of few words the Colonel again said "Really!" after which both lapsed into silence. It was not until they were some two hundred yards from the school gateway that the cadet suddenly gave a start as if he had been rudely awakened from a delightful daydream.

"Gosh, I almost forgot!" he said.

"But I wonder if you'd mind stopping here—a bit short of the entrance?"

The Colonel pulled up. The cadet got out, expressed thanks, and had

already moved off a few paces when he turned and came diffidently back.

"I say," he blurted out, "you seem an understanding sort of bloke: I wonder if I might trespass on your hospitality a bit more?"

The Colonel raised his eyebrows.

"It's about my getting into the place," he continued. "I can't of course go in at the guard-room gate without a pass . . . but there's a window down the side-street there."

"A window?" said the Colonel.

"Yes, the only thing, though, it's too high up for me to reach by myself, but if you wouldn't mind coming and bending down so as I could get up on your back, I could manage."

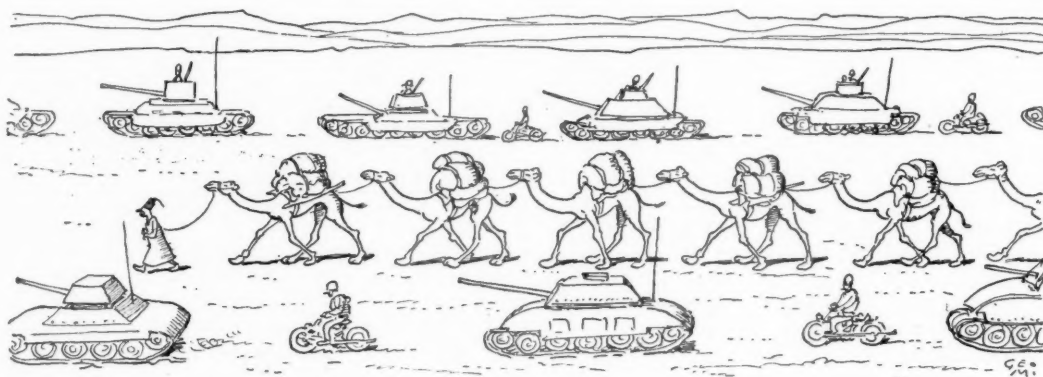
Hastily the Colonel reviewed the very limited number of solutions to the more awkward turn which events had now taken. In a matter of seconds, however, his mind was made up.

"All right," he agreed.

And so with a considerable amount of grunting from both and a frank request from the elder of the two men that the younger hurry up and remove his "something" army boot from the side of his neck they parted.

* * * * *

Next morning the Colonel made his first official inspection, moving slowly down the ranks of his new command. As he came opposite the cadet he stopped and looked him squarely in the face. It was a tense moment. And not until the latter's eyes had begun to waver and his ears to colour a deep shade of red did the Colonel continue on his way, fully satisfied that the incident of the night before might now be considered closed. G. C. N.



CONVOY

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